

a second polymeric material; and

an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space;

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cont the composite being a coextruded composite having a non-circular cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area being substantially uniform along the length of the composite.

18. (Twice Amended) A composite component having a length, the composite component comprising:

a weatherable outer layer comprising a first polymeric material;

B2 a core layer circumscribed by the outer layer and comprising a wood-filled thermoplastic second polymeric material; and

an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a thermoplastic third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space, the composite component being a fence component or a decking component;

the composite component being a coextruded composite having a non-circular cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area being substantially uniform along the length of the composite component.

26. (Twice Amended) A fencing system comprising:

a plurality of fence posts; and

B3 a plurality of fence rails fastened to the plurality of fence posts so as to form a fence, wherein each of said fence posts and fence rails comprises

a weatherable outer layer comprising a first polymeric

material;

a core layer circumscribed by the outer layer and comprising a wood-filled thermoplastic second polymeric material; and

an inner layer circumscribed by the core layer and comprising a thermoplastic third polymeric material, wherein the inner layer defines a hollow space;

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Cont each of said fence posts and rails being a coextruded composite having a length and a non-circular cross-sectional area perpendicular to the length and the cross-sectional area being substantially uniform along the length.

Add new claims 36-42 as follows:

B4 36. (New Claim) The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the core layer comprises a wood-filled acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic polymeric material.

37. (New Claim) The composite of claim 1 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.

38. (New Claim) The composite of claim 37 wherein the core layer includes a wood component in an amount effective as a filler.

39. (New Claim) The composite of claim 18 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic.

40. (New Claim) The composite of claim 18 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.

41. (New Claim) The composite of claim 26 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic.

42. (New Claim) The composite of claim 26 wherein the first polymeric material and the third polymeric material are both polyvinylchloride, and the second polymeric material is selected from the group consisting of polyvinylchloride, acrylonitrile/styrene/acrylic and combinations thereof.

REMARKS

The above-identified application has been carefully reviewed and amended in light of the Examiner's communication mailed November 15, 2002.

Independent claims 1, 18 and 26 have been amended in order to more clearly define the present invention over the references cited by the Examiner. More particularly, each of independent claims 1, 18 and 26 now includes the feature that the composite, composite component or fence rail/post, respectively, has a non-circular cross-sectional area that is substantially uniform along the length thereof.

New dependent claims 36-42 have been added in order to define additional embodiments of the invention for which patent protection is sought.